



NAVAJO NATION

Division of Health

Bio-Terrorism Preparedness Program

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 10, 2009

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Mass Vaccination for Seasonal Flu on Navajo Nation This Fall

Window Rock, AZ – The Navajo Division of Health (NDOH) and Navajo Area Indian Health Service (NAIHS) have set a date, Wednesday, October 7th, 2009, for the Navajo Area Seasonal Flu Mass Vaccination Day. More information will be released on the planning of the mass vaccination day in the next few weeks.

NDOH and NAIHS, including border town hospitals/clinics are coordinating a joint effort at influenza immunization management and operation for the entire Navajo Nation.

At this time public health officials from the Navajo Area Indian Health Service and the Navajo Division of Health are concentrating on the seasonal flu as the first big push for flu prevention.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) the Novel H1N1 vaccine is still being tested and unavailable at this time. The Novel H1N1 vaccination is expected to be administered in two shots, depending on the type of vaccine made available.

The symptoms of the Novel Influenza H1N1 Virus are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with the Novel H1N1 Virus. Like seasonal flu, the Novel H1N1 virus may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

Public health officials are urging the public to be alert to the symptoms of flu and the Novel H1N1 Influenza, especially at this time when school starts all across the country. Schools are encouraged to check www.cdc.gov for school related updates on the Novel H1N1 influenza and the flu season.

In children emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

(More)

In adults, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

Health officials advise individuals who develop influenza-like-illness (ILI) (fever with either cough or sore throat) to stay at home, to get lots of rest and drink plenty of fluids to flush the virus out of the body and to avoid dehydration. People who experience symptoms and wish to seek medical care should contact their health care providers to report illness (by telephone or other remote means) before seeking care at a clinic, physician's office, or hospital.

Individuals with severe symptoms (see above) who have difficulty breathing or have shortness of breath or are believed to be severely ill should seek immediate medical attention.

There are things that people can do to stay healthy. Health Officials recommend the following preventative measures:

- **Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it. If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve.**
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.**
- **Try to avoid close contact with sick people.**
- **If you get sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.**

The following prevention measures will help to lessen the impact on individuals, families and businesses in the event of an influenza pandemic:

Prepare for a possible school closure and plan for daycare if necessary.

Prepare for a possible extended stay in your home - Store a supply of water and food.

Have any nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins.

Talk with family members and loved ones about the novel H1N1 influenza and how they would be cared for if they got sick, or talk about what will be needed for in-home care if family members get sick from influenza.

Businesses should consider how they will operate if several of their employee are out sick or out caring for sick family members.

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Health officials are not advising healthy individuals to wear protective masks.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has created a webpage with information and updates. Visit www.cdc.gov/flu or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.

You can also call:

Navajo Community Health Representative – (928)-871-6782

Navajo Division of Health/Health Education – (928) 871-6258/6612

Navajo Nation Livestock and Veterinarian Program – (928) 871-6615

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